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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/735,588	12/12/2003	Frederick J. Bennett	EKOS.8CP1C1	1726
20995	7590	12/26/2008	EXAMINER	
KNOBBE MARTENS OLSON & BEAR LLP 2040 MAIN STREET FOURTEENTH FLOOR IRVINE, CA 92614				ROY, BAISAKHI
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3737				
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			12/26/2008	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

jcartee@kmob.com
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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/735,588	BENNETT ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	BAISAKHI ROY	3737	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 September 2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-4,9-11,13-15 and 21-53 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-4,9-11,13-15 and 21-53 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2/07,3/7/05,10/25/04</u> .	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 1-4, 9-11, 13-15, 21-27, and 53 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-13 of U.S. Patent No. 6,676,626. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the patented claims directed to catheter assembly incorporated with a more efficient ultrasound assembly anticipates the claims of application .

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

Art Unit: 3737

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1-4, 9-14, 21-37, and 44-52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Crowley (5715825) .

Crowley discloses an acoustic imaging catheter device that has a flexible ultrasonic probe with an ultrasound transducer, where the catheter body is made up of flexible material. The catheter includes a first and second sheath or a first and second medium where the first sheath portion spaced less distance from the drive shaft than the second sheath portion spaced greater distance from the drive shaft and occupying the volume between the transducer sheath and the external surface of the catheter body. Crowley further teaches that the first sheath is a continuous, flexible resinous sheath and is substantially transparent to acoustic energy transmitted and received by the transducer (col. 7 lines 30-49). Crowley teaches that the catheter may be formed having sonolucent and nonsonolucent regions made of thicker material (col. 17 lines 53-57). The catheter system includes a guidewire which extends longitudinally through the catheter body (col. 3 lines 15-17). Therefore it is inherent that the first sheath in Crowley corresponds to the first medium which is more flexible than the second sheath or second medium which is thicker walled and necessarily harder than the first sheath (col. 8 lines 29-35).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 15, 38, 39, and 53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crowley in view of Nassi et al. (4947852).

Crowley teaches said catheter assembly to include thinner and thicker segments but does not teach of a specific hardness value. In the same field of endeavor Nassi et al. teaches a catheter system with a Shore hardness of 40D-55D (col. 8 lines 6-9). It would have therefore been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a catheter assembly with sheaths of specific hardness to promote durability and withstand strain.

7. Claims 40-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crowley in view of Kawabuchi et al. (4699150).

Crowley teaches said catheter assembly to include thinner and thicker segments but does not teach of a specific hardness value. In the same field of endeavor Nassi et al. teaches a catheter system with a Shore hardness of 60-100D (col. 4 line 10). It would have therefore been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a catheter assembly with sheaths of specific hardness to promote durability and withstand strain.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to BAISAKHI ROY whose telephone number is (571)272-7139. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (7:30 a.m. - 4p.m.).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian L. Casler can be reached on 571-272-4956. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

BR
/B. R./
Examiner, Art Unit 3737

/Long V Le/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3768